

Message Text

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PAGE 01 MOGADI 01784 201133Z
ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 EB-08 DOTE-00 DODE-00 FAA-00 H-01
CIAE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 IO-13 L-03 SS-15 NSC-05
MCT-01 SP-02 SY-05 USSS-00 COME-00 PA-01 PRS-01
USIA-06 /079 W
-----018403 210826Z /20

R 201050Z OCT 77
FM AMEMBASSY MOGADISCIO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5409
INFO AMEMBASSY BONN

C O N F I D E N T I A L MOGADISCIO 1784

E.O. 11652: XGD-1
TAGS: PINS, PORS, SP
SUBJECT: HIJACKED LUFTHANSA 737

1. THE EMBASSY PLANNED TO COMPILE A SUPPLEMENTAL NARRATIVE ON THE LUFTHANSA HIJACKING, BUT SINCE ALL OF THE MATERIAL AVAILABLE HERE HAS BEEN REPORTED TO WASHINGTON, AND WE ARE NOW CAUGHT UP IN THE SOMALI INTERNATIONAL TRADE FAIR AND NATIONAL DAY, EMBASSY RESOURCES WILL NOT PERMIT US TO DO SO. WE SUBMIT INSTEAD SOME ADDITIONAL INFORMATION FROM A CONVERSATION WITH FRG CHARGE MICHAEL LIBAL:

2. THE CRITICAL PHASE OF THE RESCUE OPERATION CAME ABOUT 1330 Z ON OCT 17 WHEN THE SOMALI MINISTERS AT THE AIRPORT WERE CONVINCED THE TERRORISTS WOULD BLOW UP THE AIRCRAFT. THE SOMALIS HAD FOR ONE PERIOD OF ABOUT THIRTY MINUTES ASKED ALL THE GERMANS TO LEAVE THE CONTROL TOWER, AND NEGOTIATED ALONE WITH THE TERRORISTS. WHEN MINISTER OF STATE WISCHENEWSKI ASSURED THE SOMALI MINISTERS THAT THE TERRORISTS WOULD NOT DO SO, AND THAT HE WOULD TAKE FULL RESPONSIBILITY IF THEY DID, THE EFFECTIVE DIRECTION OF THE OPERATION PASSED INTO GERMAN HANDS. THE SOMALIS NEVER CHALLENGED IT AGAIN.

3. SOMALIS PARTICIPATED IN THE ACTION TO THE EXTENT OF
CONFIDENTIAL

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PAGE 02 MOGADI 01784 201133Z

PROVIDING LOGISTICAL AND REENFORCING SUPPORT. IT WAS WISCHENEWSKI'S INTENT TO INVOLVE SOMALIS IN THE ACTUAL TEAM THAT ENTERED THE AIRCRAFT. WHETHER SOMALIS DID SO OR NOT IS UNCERTAIN.

4. THE DEPARTING STRIKE TEAM LEFT ONE MEMBER BEHIND IN MOGADISCIO. HE WAS TO BE JOINED BY ADDITIONAL EXPERTS WHO HAVE THE RESPONSI-

BILITY OF CHECKING THE AIRCRAFT AND LUGGAGE FOR POSSIBLE EXPLOSIVES. THE PLANE WILL NOT BE MOVED UNTIL IT IS THOROUGHLY EXAMINED.

5. THE HIJACKERS NEVER QUESTIONED THE ARRIVAL OF THE SECOND LUFTHANSA PLANE CARRYING THE STRIKE TEAM. LIBAL DISCUSSED THE MATTER WITH THE PSYCHOLOGIST FROM WISCHENIEWSKI'S GROUP, AND IT WAS DECIDED THAT SO LONG AS ITS LANDING WAS NOT QUESTIONED, THE BEST COURSE WAS TO SAY NOTHING ABOUT IT. A CONTINGENCY EXPLANATION HAD BEEN DEVELOPED, BUT WAS NOT NEEDED.

6. SOMALI AUTHORITIES DESCRIBED THE CONDITION OF THE SURVIVING HIJACKER AS SERIOUS REQUIRING INTENSIVE TREATMENT. SHE WAS WOUNDED IN THE SHOULDER. THE IDENTITIES OF THE HIJACKERS REMAIN UNKNOWN. THE GERMAN TEAM MAY HAVE TAKEN FINGERPRINTS OF THE DECEASED BEFORE THE BODIES WERE TURNED OVER TO SOMALI CUSTODY.

7. SIX GERMAN CITIZENS ARE STILL IN THE MEDINA POLICE HOSPITAL. FOUR ARE ELDERLY, AND SUFFERING FROM EXHAUSTION, BUT THEIR CONDITION IS NOT SERIOUS. THE OTHER TWO STAYED BEHIND TO BE HELPFUL.

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: AIRCRAFT HIJACKING, RESCUE OPERATIONS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 20-Oct-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1977MOGADI01784
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: X1
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D770387-0469
Format: TEL
From: MOGADISCIO
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1977/newtext/t19771038/aaaabgma.tel
Line Count: 84
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 13263a2a-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION AF
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 09-Feb-2005 12:00:00 am
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 846227
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: HIJACKED LUFTHANSA 737
TAGS: PINS, PORS, SP
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odhc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/13263a2a-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
22 May 2009
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009